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Tab A

Approved For Release 2005/04/18 : CIA-RDP82M00531R000400200003-0

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Approved For Release 2005/04/18 : CIA-RDP82M00531R000400200003-0

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MEMORANDUM FOR:

SUBJECT: Participation in DELPHI Experiment

1. One of the recent developments in long-range planning is the so-called DELPHI Technique, i.e., the systematic use of expert opinion for obtaining answers and, if possible, a consensus from a panel of experts on a particular issue. We have received approval from the Director, PPB to test the DELPHI Technique and have selected Career Personnel Management as the subject for a pilot study.

2. Briefly, we would like you to participate in this experiment as one of the study's experts. Note well that the attached experiment is exactly that -- an experiment, and participation is strictly voluntary. If you agree to participate, the overall demands on your time will be approximately 6-9 hours spread over several weeks, i.e., 1 to 2 hours per questionnaire. More time will be required at the outset, to become acquainted with the experimental ground rules, than in the latter stages of the DELPHI questionnaire.

3. Our version of the DELPHI employs the anonymous method of response, i.e., respondents will be UNKNOWN to each other and known only to a 3-man DELPHI Panel for identification, scoring, and feedback.

4. Let us know by 6 February if you can participate or not participate. One of the members of the scoring panel will be around to discuss this matter with you and answer any questions you may have on the nature of the DELPHI and/or the questionnaires.

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EXPERIMENT IN HUMAN  
INFORMATION PROCESSING  
DELPHI I

PREFACE TO INSTRUCTIONS

The experiment in which you are taking part is one of a series investigating human information processing. Your primary task will be to answer questions of a specific information type. The experiment is not a quiz or an examination, nor is it a test of social influence. We are interested in the way groups use incomplete information to arrive at factual conclusions.

It is not expected that you will know the exact answer to any of the questions. However, for most of them you will have some general knowledge that will enable you to make an estimate--an informed guess--of the answer. You are to make as good an estimate as you can; but in any case, answer every question as best you can.

On page 3 is the Respondent's Form which requests certain background information. As in any experimental study, certain (and in this case minimal) descriptive data are required.

This experiment, investigating career management, is not a hidden and manipulative process by which Respondents are brain-washed into thinking, believing, and feeling the way someone might want them to without realizing what is happening. The process will

be open in that it will be continually described and discussed (via feedback between rounds) with the participants. Moreover, the experiment is not guided by a staff panel which is covertly in control and by some magic hides this fact from the Respondents.

One objective of this experiment is not to suppress conflicting answers to the questions. Consequently, all Respondents will be anonymous and each respondent will be assigned a number for identification purposes only. In order to maintain anonymity do not discuss the questions or the experiment with any of known or suspected participants. The panel will be available at any time if any questions concerning your task should arise. It should be noted that a copy of your answers should be retained for reference and comparison in the succeeding rounds and answers to questions should be typed before returning them to the panel. Limit your response to each question requiring a narrative answer to one page. Additionally, if the list of given questions motivate you to suggest subsidiary questions, write them on a separate sheet and append them to the questionnaire. The time requirement to complete the first questionnaire is 2 weeks. If for some reason you cannot complete your questionnaire within the two-week time period, contact the panel for special arrangements.

INSTRUCTIONS

This is the first in a series of several Rounds (perhaps as many as 5), intended to obtain from your group as accurate an estimate as possible of the answer to each of the questions listed on a separate sheet. The subject for this DELPHI experiment is Career Management.

Before attempting to answer any of the primary questions, read all of them, and rate yourself with regard to your relative confidence in contributing to their answers. Specifically, pick out those questions where you feel relatively most confident to contribute to its answer and write '5' next to the answer. Next, pick out that statement where you feel relatively least confident to contribute and write '1' next to the answer. Having thus established a scale from 1 to 5 within which to express your relative confidence, rate yourself with regard to the remaining questions by similarly writing '1', '2', '3', '4', or '5' next to the appropriate statement.

Some of the questions call for a numerical answer. To the right of the question are three blanks. These are to be filled in with numbers which represent a low estimate, a mid estimate, and a high estimate. As an example, suppose the question were:

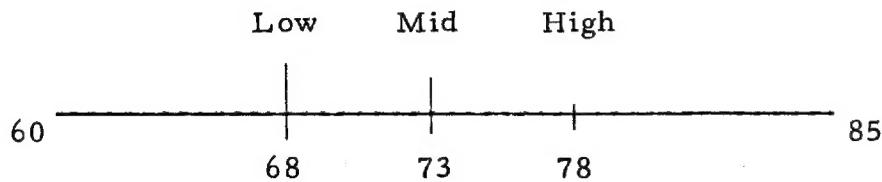
What is the present temperature of this room?

L \_\_\_\_\_ degrees

M \_\_\_\_\_

H \_\_\_\_\_

The temperature is certainly no lower than 60 degrees and certainly no higher than 85 degrees. Thinking along the lines of the figure



as you proceed up the scale, you might judge that around 68 degrees there is a one to three chance that the temperature is lower. That would be your low estimate. At around 73 degrees you might think there is a 50-50 chance that it is higher--your mid estimate. Finally, you might consider that at 78 degrees the chances are no better than one in three that the temperature is higher and that would be your high estimate. The numbers just stated are only illustrative.

The questions you are being asked in the experiment are not concerned with simple physical quantities like temperature, but the general procedure of formulating low, mid, and high estimates is the same. Questions requiring a numerical answer are flagged with an asterisk. In the first Round, please answer the questions relying on what background information you may have. Do not look up or research the answers, but be impressionistic. We ask your cooperation on this experiment rule. In the second and subsequent Rounds you will be furnished a summary of the answers for the group. The Summary will consist of the median answers (when possible) of the group, and the two quartiles, that is, the range in which 50% of the group's answers are found. This summary is a form of "pooling" of the information of all the members of the group and will serve as a basis for revising your answers if it seems appropriate.

Questionnaire No. 1

On the following pages there are several questions of a specific information type. Some will require a numerical answer (flagged with an asterisk) while others will require a narrative. Remember--keep a record of your responses.

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Approved For Release 2005/04/18 : CIA-RDP82M00531R000400200003-0

Approved For Release 2005/04/18 : CIA-RDP82M00531R000400200003-0

Tab B

Approved For Release 2005/04/18 : CIA-RDP82M00531R000400200003-0

Approved For Release 2005/04/18 : CIA-RDP82M00531R000400200003-0

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DELPHI I

QUESTIONNAIRE #2

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QUESTIONNAIRE #2

PART I.

This is the second in our series of several DELPHI questionnaires. The first seven questions that had been posed in the first questionnaire (with a few modifications) are repeated below, together with the information on the median and the interquartile range (IQR) of the 15 first round responses. 1 The IQR is the interval containing the middle 50% of the responses. 1 The average group rating is given as a matter of information only. You need not re-rate yourself on this round.

Please reconsider your previous estimate, change it if you wish. <sup>1</sup> (only your best estimate for Round 2). Whenever your present Round 1 answer (i. e., mid-estimate) is OUTSIDE the interquartile range (IQR), briefly state your reason why you think the answer should be greater (or less) than the IQR than that given by the majority of the respondents. <sup>1</sup> (No such reason needs to be given when your answer is inside the IQR.)

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<sup>1</sup>As in Round 1, keep a copy of your answers and please type your returned answers.

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Approved For Release 2005/04/18 : CIA-RDP82M00531R000400200003-0

Next 1 Page(s) In Document Exempt

Approved For Release 2005/04/18 : CIA-RDP82M00531R000400200003-0

QUESTIONNAIRE #2 (Continued)

PART II.

In this part, the same nine questions (8 through 16) that had been posed in the first questionnaire are repeated below, together with the reasons "For, Against, Don't Know, etc."

A. Please reconsider your previous answer, this time taking into account the information offered by other respondents on the preceding round. Consider the stated reasons, give them whatever weight you think they deserve, and then write your present (possibly revised) estimate as to the answer to the question.<sup>1</sup> (If same as before, so state.)

B. Also provide a "Critique of Reasons", i. e., briefly state which one of the reasons offered by others on each question you found unconvincing and why.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> As in Round 1, keep a copy of your answers and please type your returned answers.

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Approved For Release 2005/04/18 : CIA-RDP82M00531R000400200003-0

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